

Message Text

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16

ACTION INT-05

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R 250615Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5134

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

UNCLAS CANBERRA 1214

FOR INTERIOR, BSFW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, TGEN, AS, US

SUBJ: WILDLIFE: GOA TO ALLOW LIMITED KANGAROO EXPORTS
FROM NSW AND SA

REF: (A) CANBERRA 335 (B) STATE 275168 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: GOA WILL MODIFY ITS EXPORT BAN ON KANGAROO SKINS AND PRODUCTS EFFECTIVE MARCH 3 TO ALLOW LIMITED EXPORTS OF SKINS TAKEN IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA. TOTAL BAN REMAINS FOR SKINS FROM QUEENSLAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA, WHICH HAVE NOT IMPLEMENTED GOA-APPROVED CONSERVATION PROGRAM. 1975 QUOTAS WILL BE 205,000 SKINS FOR NSW AND 80,000 FOR SA. EXPORT OF SKINS STOCKPILED SINCE EXPORT BAN IMPOSED IN 1973 WILL NOT BE ALLOWED, BUT PROBLEM OF IDENTIFICATION SEEMS FORMIDABLE. MORE DETAILS TO BE POUCHED. END SUMMARY

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2. GOA ANNOUNCED FEB. 20 A PARTIAL RELAXATION ON ITS EXPORT

BAN ON KANGAROO SKINS AND PRODUCTS EFFECTIVE MARCH 3, 1975. MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION, DR. MOSS CASS, AND THE NEW MINISTER FOR CUSTOMS AND EXCISE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR. KEP ENDERBY, JOINTLY ANNOUNCED THAT LIMITED EXPORTS WILL BE ALLOWED OF SKINS AND PRODUCTS TAKEN FROM AUSTRALIAN STATES "WHERE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED", NAMELY NEW SOUTH WALES AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA, WHICH HAVE COMPLIED FULLY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF AUSTRALIAN AND STATE GOVERNMENTS' WORKING PARTY ON KANGAROO CONSERVATION. EXPORT BAN WILL REMAIN FOR TWO NON-COMPLYING STATES (E.G. QUEENSLAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA) UNTIL THEY INTRODUCE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS APPROVED BY GOA. THE MINISTERS NOTED WITH PLEASURE THAT QUEENSLAND PLANS TO INTRODUCE A "SEALED TAGGING SYSTEM" AND EXPRESSED HOPE QUEENSLAND SYSTEM COULD SOON BE ACCEPTED. STATEMENT NOTES THAT THREAT TO KANGAROO SPECIES HAD LED U.S. TO BAN IMPORTS OF SKINS AND PRODUCTS.

3. IN CONVERSATION WITH BODEN, DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION (DEC), AND MCALPINE, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER CASS, SCIENCE LIAISON OFFICER LEARNED THAT EXPORT QUOTAS FOR TEN REMAINING MONTHS OF CALENDAR YEAR 1975 WILL BE 205,000 SKINS FOR NSW AND 80,000 FOR SA. SUB-QUOTAS FOR THREE SPECIES COMMERCIALY HUNTED HAVE NOT BEEN DEvised, BUT THIS POSSIBILITY HAS NOT BEEN RULED OUT. GOA FACES THORNY PROBLEM OF POLICING EXPORTS SINCE IT INSISTS SKINS STOCKPILED SINCE EXPORT BAN IMPOSED IN APRIL, 1973 BUT TAKEN BEFORE NEXT MARCH 3 MAY NOT BE EXPORTED. FOOL-PROOF SYSTEM FOR ASSURING THAT ONLY SKINS TAKEN AFTER MARCH 3 ARE EXPORTED WILL BE DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT. GOA IS PREPARING LENGTHY BACKGROUND STATEMENT ON DECISION. ONCE THIS DOCUMENT IS MADE PUBLIC, EMBASSY WILL POUCH COPIES OF IT AND FEB.20 STATEMENT. DEC IS SENDING EXPLANATORY LETTER TO DR. RONALD SKOOG, BSWF, INTERIOR.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: MINISTER CASS TOLD PARLIAMENT LAST DECEMBER THAT HE HAD RECOMMENDED THIS RELAXATION TO THEN MINISTER FOR CUSTOMS AND EXCISE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL MURPHY. HOWEVER, MURPHY, AN ARDENT KANGAROO CONSERVATIONIST, TOOK NO ACTION, AND IT FELL TO HIS SUCCESSOR, ENDERBY, TO UNCLASSIFIED

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ACCEPT CASS RECOMMENDATIONS. GOA ALREADY GETTING SOME BACKLASH FROM CONSERVATIONIST GROUPS, WHO FAVOR TOTAL EXPORT BAN, BUT LATEST DECISION SEEMS REASONABLE IN LIGHT OF FINDINGS OF U.S. INTERIOR TEAM (SMITH AND SKOOG), WHO VISITED AUSTRALIA IN 1974, AND RECENT USG DECISION (REF B) TO LIST THREE LARGE SPECIES AS "THREATENED" RATHER THAN "ENDANGERED". HARROP

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